

The Doting ATHENIANS

Imposing QUESTIONS, no PROOFS.

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ANSWER to their QUESTIONS and most apparent MISTAKES, about the People commonly called QUAKERS and their Profession.

This being our 5th. Answer to their Mercuries of the 7th. 11th. and 14th. of June last.

1 Tim. 6. 4. — Doting about Questions and Strifes of Words, &c.

WHAT Justice or Fair-Dealing can we expect from Persons vainly put up by their Fleshy Minds? You pretended *Athenians* have made too much haste to make good speed; you are too precipitant and preposterous in your Proceedings against us to do us right; you are so Credulous, to take Things on trust against us, as thereupon to Charge, Sentence, Condemn and Brand us with Infamy, before any Judicial Tryal.

First you pass Sentence on us, and then heap Questions upon us to find out Matter against us. You ground much of your Charge in your *Mercury of June* the 14th. upon a Book, called, *Sweet Sips of Spiritual Wine*, in which there is a small Tract, called, *John the Divine's Divinity*, Printed by *Giles Calvert*, which you call a famous Book of theirs (meaning the Quakers) and you believe, one of the first ever Printed by any of their Gang; and is indeed (you say) the most regular and fairest System of Quakerism you yet ever saw.

And from this, you think, you have given us a very fatal Blow; but herein you are more Credulous than Discreet; for that Book is none of ours; it is none of the Quaker's either in Title or Style: You should first have better Inform'd your selves whether the Author was a Quaker, and an approved Writer among them, before you had Charged us with the said Book, seeing much of your Charge is taken out of it.

Not only to prove your false Charge, *That we deny the distinct Existence of the Soul after Death*, but also, *That the Quakers deny Angels, Spirits, Heaven and Hell*, you quote the said Book, *Sweet Sips*, &c. which you refer to many times over; from whence you Charge us not only with denying Angels, Spirits, Heaven and Hell, but say, *You'll prove we assert the contrary*; for which you quote *Sweet Sips* again. But after you have given your Charge, you do but very poorly beg the Question, viz. *Let 'em, if they can, shew us any of their Writers, wherein any of these are asserted as distinct Substances or distinct States or Places for Punishments or Rewards after this Life is ended*. However to this purpose we have often asserted, as really believing both distinct Angels and Spirits, as to their Beings or distinct Spiritual Substances; as also Heaven and Hell, as distinct States and Places for Punishments and Rewards after this Life is ended. We never knew these doubted of among us, but often Preached and Affirmed in Words and Writings: But how do you prove we assert the contrary? For this you quote *Sweet Sips*, chap. 22. viz. "The Angels are "Intituled Ministering Spirits, &c. the Mystery of it is this, a Figure "of God's many Blessings, also gracious Providences. Thus *Jacob* "called his Brothers favour an Angel: Fallen Angels are bad Spirits, termed Devils, i. e. The Authors of Evil, this is a Figure "of God's Mind concerning the Mystery of Iniquity; they may also type out croſs Dispensations, p. 50. Divine Love is Heaven, "Hell is dreadful Apprehensions of God, Sin is the Brimstone of "this Hell, the Discoveries of God are Heaven and Hell, his Gracious and his Wrathful Presence, there is no other Place. And thus, you say, *You have proved all your Charge; whence it follows (say you) as you asserted, That Quakerism is really a Compendium of all Heresies) thus you.*)

But stop, you run too fast, How have you thus proved all your Charge against the Quakers? What, by falsely Intitling them to an Author, a Book which was never theirs, nor Authorized by them? As we presume you will never prove your *Sweet Sips* to be the Quakers. And yet you wrong that too, for therein Angels are confessed, *That they were Created good pure Spirits*, chap. 22. Your saying, *You have thus proved all your Charge*, is so notoriously false, that it makes us take the less notice of the rest of your groundless Accusations in your Paper, being minded, to try you in this, if you'll be so ingenuous, as to retract this your Authority, as well as your other Falshoods Charged, as that of the *Soul's Sleeping*, and that gross Lye against *John Whitehead*.

When you have Charged us with *Denying the Resurrection of the Body*, this Untruth you contradict your selves, by what you place on us, from your Author (whom you Intitle us to) "That the "being risen with Christ is the first Resurrection, and there is a second "Resurrection of the Body, when the Natural shall be made Spiritual, "and Mortal Immortal. But your Instance, *That G. Whitehead, a hundred People, plainly acknowledged, That he did not believe his soul ris again after Death*. In this you are misinformed, those not his Words, But that he did not believe his Body should be the *it now is, a Natural Earthly Body, but a Spiritual Heavenly* according to *1 Cor. 15. 37, 38, 40, 44*. Charge, *That they (i. e. the Quakers) deny the Divinity of* is so utterly false: As it is also, *That they deny his Humanity;* Christ's Manhood or his being *Man*, which we never

After you have unduly passed your severe Sentence and Condemnation upon us (the People call'd Quakers) and what you falsely term *our Opinions*, and as falsely pretend to have proved them all, you are fain to impose Questions on the same Subjects charged, being very inquisitive for a distinct Answer to your ten Questions, though we find they amount rather to three times ten (several being crowded together in one) that by your doting in Questions you might find Proof (if you could) for your unproved previous Charge unduly exhibited; but divers of your Questions appearing both Unlearned, and in Terms Unscriptural as well as Impertinent, to affect us or our Principles, we have Power, in point of our Christian Liberty, not to accept (but shun) such unlearned ones; and since you have so severely prejudged and condemned us all, before Tryal, as *Heretics, blasphemous Idiots, &c.* we may justly supersede your Sentence, and call you in Question for the same: We have as much right to Catechize you, as you us; and as *Men* we are not bound to answer your Interrogatories, after you have Condemned us; but as *Christians*, we condescend to give you a better Answer than your Questions or you either have merited from us.

Quæst. 1. Whether you do not all positively deny the Bible to be the Word of God?

Aſw. We do not deny the Holy Scriptures therein contain'd, to be the *Words of God*, but question where they positively term the Bible the *Word of God*? Pray answer by plain Scripture, seeing Christ is therein called the *Word of God*, and in the beginning was the Word; and the *Word* being often mentioned with respect to that Divine Power which upholds all things, and which giveth Men *Life, Light and Understanding*, and from whence the Holy Scriptures first proceeded.

Q. And whether there was ever one of your Writers who granted it?

A. Probably some have; though not in a strict and proper Sense and Scriptural way of Speaking, but in a Figurative; putting *Words or Sayings of God* for the *Word* from whence they proceeded.

Q. Whether they do not affirm and esteem it imperfect, and no compleat Rule of Faith and Manners?

A. To the first part: No, if you mean the Holy Scriptures; the *Law of the Lord is perfect*, the *Divine Truths* and Doctrin contain'd therein being given by Divine Inspiration, are perfect. To the last part, by compleat Rule of Faith and Manners; Do you mean the whole Bible, both old and new Testament? Or do you mean the Scripture or Writings therein abstractedly and literally taken, without Interpretation? If with Interpretation, who must be the Interpreter? Is not the Spirit of Truth the best Interpreter? And how can this be excluded a *Compleat Rule*? Or to take you in the best Sense, do you not intend "*The Cooperation of God's spirit together with those Divine Truths contained in the Scripture working in us Faith and Obedience*" (your own Word are?) Do you not think all this Essential to a compleat Rule of Faith and Practice? Though we freely grant the Scripture (as it cannot be broken) is not only a Rule of Doctrin, but contains many very precious Rules to be believed and practised; *The principal Supreme Guide and Rule of Faith*, being the Spirit Christ promised to guide true Believers into all Truths.

Q. And whether you think not your own Writings of equal Authority with it (i. e. the Bible?) (A. No.)

Q. And whatever any true Quaker either Writes or Speaks (in their publick Assemblies) to be really as Infallible as what was Spoken or Written by our Saviour or any of his Apostles?

A. No; But whatever the Spirit of Christ speaks in and by such or any other fearing God: The Truth is unalterably the same for ever.

Q. 2. Whether you own Jesus Christ, who was born of the Virgin, to be God equal with the Father from all Eternity?

A. The same Jesus Christ, the *Emanuel*, God with us; God manifest in Flesh, was certainly God, in relation to his Divine Being, from all Eternity, though as born of the Virgin, according to the Flesh, he was Man, of the Seed of David.

Q. And whether you own the Man, who was of the Seed of David and born of the Virgin and suffered upon the Cross, to be the true Christ, your Christ and God, blessed for ever?

A. Yea, we own him to be the true Christ, our Christ, and also God, blessed for ever, Rom. 9. 5.

Q. Whether you expect to be saved only by the Merits of what he has suffered?

A. Our Salvation is on'y by Christ, our Saviour and Redeemer, both with respect to the Merits of what he then suffered for us, and also to his work of Grace in us, to save us from Sin and Condemnation, being reconciled by his Death, that we may be saved by his Life. 'Tis only by his Merits and Work, and not by our own.

Q. Or whether you think the same Christ really suffered for you, who now sits in Heaven at the right hand of the Father?

A. Yea,

again for our Justification. [We see by this your Question what young Students you are (and how unskillful) in our Christian Principles and Profession, and what strange and groundless Jealousies you have harboured against us.]

Q. 3. Whether you own the Holy Spirit to be God, distinct from the Father and Son? or any of their Properties are distinct from each other?

A. We ask you, Whether the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be not One God, blessed for ever? We say, Yea; what say you? And where doth the Scripture so term the Holy Spirit, God, distinct from the Father and the Son? Or when you say, The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Ghost is God, do you mean, that each is God, distinct from the other? would that be good Doctrine, think ye? And what mean you by their Properties, distinct from each other? Is it not proper to the Son to be called Father? Yea, the Everlasting Father? and to the Son to be sent, or to proceed from the Father, as well as the Holy Ghost?

Q. Whether you own the Holy Trinity, or Three Persons, and One God, blessed for ever?

A. If by Trinity, be meant the three Divine Witnesses in Heaven, 1 Job. 5. 7. we own them to be One God, blessed for ever.

Q. 4. Whether you own your Light within to be God the Father, Son, or Holy Ghost, or all three together, or only their Grace and Operation within you?

A. We own our Light within to be a Divine Light of God and Christ; 'tis a Light of both the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who are One inseparable Being and Fountain of Light; God (who is above all, and through all, and in you all) is our Light and our Salvation, whose Light in us and all Men (though gradually made known to us) is a Divine Principle of Life and Grace, which is more than an Operation only.

Q. 5. Whether you partake of either of the Sacraments in your Assemblies, and don't absolutely neglect 'em as they are outward Symbols used by all others who won't be accounted Christians?

A. What Rule in Scripture have you for the word *Sacraments*? and for applying that term to the Elements of Bread and Wine? The substance whereof, or things signified, (by those outward signs) we partake of in our Christian Communion; which you have nothing to do withal.

Q. 6. Whether you believe Angels or any immaterial Spirits, besides the Soul of Man?

A. Yes, we believe there are Angels which are Ministering Spirits, besides the Soul of Man. What you mean by [immaterial Spirits] is a question, seeing you seem (in your 11th Article) to grant, Angels, Spirits, to be distinct Substances? i.e. then, by your learned definition, Angels must be distinct Substances without matter or substance; distinct Substances, yet immaterial Spirits. Pray where had you this Learning?

Q. 7. Whether you believe the Soul of Man to have had any Beginning or distinct Existence thereof after Death?

A. Yea, both; that the Soul of Man had a Beginning and must have a distinct Existence or Being after Death. We really believe we shall be individually and numerically the same Souls preserved in our distinct Beings, by him that gave us life and being, and that our Souls shall be as many in Number after Death as now they are before Death. And therefore your Charge of the Soul being entirely absorpt (i.e. supt or swallowed up) in God, so as to lose its individuality, is an ignorant, idle and false Charge; 'twas the old Ranters Notion, never ours'.

Q. Whether you don't in terms deny the Resurrection of the Body?

A. No.

Q. And call those fools who affirm we shall rise with the same Bodies we had while living?

A. The Apostle calls such fools also who question with what body, &c. tells them, thou knowest not that body that shall be, and distinguisheth between the Natural Body and the Spiritual Body, between Bodies Celestial and Bodies Terrestrial, 1 Cor. 15. ch.

Q. Whether you believe any real Resurrection, or mean any thing besides Regeneration in this Life?

A. Yea, a Real Resurrection, not only by Regeneration from Sin, but from Sufferings here; and unto Glory hereafter.

Q. And whether you think every Man's Soul shall be reunited to a distinct Body at the Day of Judgment?

A. Yea, to a distinct Body, proper to it, as it shall please God to give it, 1 Cor. 15.

Q. 8. Who was your first Founder? Or, to avoid Cavils, who do you esteem your first Restorer? Or who first taught Quakerism, as Quakerism, here in England, or in any other Nation?

A. Christ Jesus was our first Founder, Foundation and Restorer, and he made use of several Instruments, as he pleased, powerfully to preach Him and his Name and Power among us. Your term Quakerism we reject, as being a Nick-name, in scorn and contempt cast upon our Christian Religion and Profession.

Q. 9. Did your People Quake and Tremble or no, when they first appeared in England? Do they Quake now? If not, what you give as the Reason of one and 't other?

A. Many did and some do both fear and tremble at the Word of the Lord in several states, conditions and exercises, (because of the Glory of the Lord, and of his glorious Power that's risen in our day) as his Servants did in former Ages; though you seem but scuriously to question us in this matter.

Q. 10. Where we may find your Creed or any account of your Religion? and whether 'tis not alter'd in several particulars since your rise?

A. Come and see, come into the true Light and see, and you may find our Creed, our Belief, our living Faith in Christ Jesus the Author of it, the same, not altered, but the true Apostolical Creed; and therefore neither need nor shall we subscribe to any at

Creed, but we will own to credit it, that you have so grossly reproached and disgraced us and our Profession, as you have done, to discredit us with the Titles of Heresies, dangerous and detestable Opinions, horrid Blasphemies, Idolatry, &c. Merc. Jun. 7. And give Positive Judgment, That Fanaticism, Enthusiasm and Infidelity together, make up the Creed of a Quaker.

And yet now you are very solicitous to enquire and find out on Creed; thus preposterous and contradictory you are in your procedure, first to give judgment, pass sentence, and then enquire of the Parties condemned by you for matter of fact against themselves. May you not be sorely ashamed of such extrajudicial proceedings, both contrary to common Law and Justice; and especially seeing you have no power to impose an Oath Ex Officio to force persons to be their own accusers and prosecutors? It had far better become you to have been sparing of your sentence and condemnation upon the Quaker and his Creed, until you had known it and been better informed, as to matter of fact, charged by you. You say, It is in vain to bring an Act of Parliament to prove our selves Christians; but you mistake, we did not bring it for that end, but to shew you, that our Profession is recognized by Act of Parliament as Christian, but slighted by you, tho' it be a Profession of our Belief, In God, the Father, and in his Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit, one God, blessed for evermore, and withal acknowledging, the holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be given by Divine Inspiration. But tho' this has the Approbation of Parliament and Sanction of Law for our Exemption (or Liberty of Conscience) from certain Penal Laws, yet you are not pleased with it no more than with our Liberty. You flatteringly, yet jeeringly, say of the Parliament, viz. For (with all respect possible to that August Assembly) there are other things which they can't do besides making a Man a Woman. You might have been more mannerly towards that Assembly however than thus to *Cut or Crop* at their Proceedings in the said Act and Confession in it; against which you can also confidently make your Exception, viz. There is not a word in it asserting the Trinity of Persons, nor of the Scriptures being the Word of God or Compleat Rule of Faith and Manners. It seems the Parliament wanted you to dictate to them. Here is not a word of asserting the Trinity of Persons, (say you) and what then? is theirs defective therefore? No. Therein it appears the Parliament was far more ingenuous than your selves; they did not impose upon us an unscriptural Profession, but were content with one in Scripture-terms; which you are not, but rather striving about words, even when the thing you intend is granted in Scripture-phrase. This your Affront to the Parliament does not bespeak your Humility, no more than your Turbulent Work of scandalously Libellizing and Branding peaceable Subjects, even a whole Body of Christian People, with being Blasphemers, Heretics, &c. to make division among the People, as if nothing less than Persecution would satiate your Envy.

And seeing your Faith stands so much in Words and Terms, we would ask you what Rule you have in the holy Scriptures for the words, *Trinity of Persons*? or had you them not rather from your Mother-Church? and if so, then the Scripture is not the Rule of your Faith therein, but the Church. And then how esteem you the Scriptures the compleat Rule of your Faith? You seem to ask pardon for your accusation about the Soul's sleeping after Death; but then instead of true Repentance, you add two gross Falshoods to it, viz. That we hold after Death no Soul, no Resurrection. Also your gross lying story against John Whitehead, about his monstrous Eigness, you endeavour to extenuate, by telling us, That the extravagancy of the Relation (i.e. of that unlucky Story, as you call it) tempted you beyond your Design. But this will not excuse your blind Credulity of a lying Story, nor your malicious Confidence in divulging it to the Nation, which you greatly abuse with these your Libels: And you have many more lying Stories against us in general, to retract particularly: 1. That the Quakers use to say, that there St. Paul bad not the Spirit, (viz. in saying, God is my witness, Rom. 1. 9. God knoweth that I lie not, 2 Cor. 11. 31, &c.) as in your Merc. June 7. 2. And that the Quakers Worship each other, Pray to Man, Worship Man, &c. 3. And that they deny the distinct Existence of the Soul after Death. 4. And that they hold its entire absorpt in God, and to lose its Individuality. 5. And that they rest on their own Merits, Merc. June, 14. With many more notorious and known Falshoods, and lying Stories and Defamations cast upon us, in your Accusations and Charges, both in this your Mercury of June, 14. and the other two preceding (already answer'd by us) for which we say, The Lord rebuke you, and grant you Repentance and Forgiveness.

P O S T S C R I P T.

NOW you, our obscure Adversaries, or Athenian Mercury Writers, We, whose Names are under-written, do fairly Propose to you, (that it may appear to the World, that we are not ashamed of our Christian Principles and Profession, nor afraid to stand by and defend them against your Perversions, Oppositions and Clamorous Reproaches) to own what you have writ or may write against us, by subscribing your real Names to the same, and not lie lurking in obscurity and smiting in the dark, if you dare own and stand by all you write against us, or intend it to be of any credit, that we may know where to find you, and more readily shew you your Mistakes. And, as persons well known in and about this City, we hereunto subscribe our Names,

Charles Bathurst, William Crouch,
John Edridge, George Whitehead
William Meade, Walter Bentham
Theodore Eccleston, Thomas Parker,
William Ingram,